Catholic Theatre Conference

PRODUCTION CALENDAR

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"BERNADETTE TOURS"

To those Conference members who rarely have an opportunity to attend a professional performance of a play winning whole-hearted approval, Mr. Victor Payne-Jennings' announcement of a projected tour of "The Song of Bernadette" will be welcome news. Enthusiastictheatre parties rush to mind - and after-theatre discussions, even more animated if there has been a local non-professional performance.

The professional company to be directed by Walter Kerr has not been named, but the productions of "Whiteoaks" and "The Corn is Green" with Ethel Barrymore and of "Therese" with Dame May Whitty and Eva LeGallienne sponspored by Mr. Payne-Jennings, and his successful management of the "Rebecca" tour now in its forty-second week will serve as samples of the standard to be expected. Present plans point to a Boston opening during Christmas week.

Would you like to have "Bernadette" come to your town? Conference members can aid in the plotting of bookings by sending the following information to us:

1) Has "Bernadette" been played in your town?
2) How many performances?
3) Would you sponsor one or more performances of the profe ssional production?
4) Name of Group
5) City or town?

Yes, we ask that this information be sent to us for an ulterior motive.

(over)

"BERNADETTE" TOURS

Sometime we hope to be able to go to those who tie up plays for years because they dread loss of road-company business with the proof that the release of a play to amateur groups encourages interest in the play.

You can help is in the preparation of this data if y u will send your answers on a separate sheet of paper.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

During Christmas Week Executive Board Members, including Conference Chairman Rev. James J. Donohue, will hold their semi-annual meeting in New York.

Regional Chairman are invited to attend as advisory members, and it is hoped that several will be on hand for the discussion of proposals for regional activity.

SEVEN MIRRORS TO BE PUBLISHED

Samuel French, Inc., is publishing Seven Mirrors". Books will be ready in three or four months.

In the interim the Conference will continue to supply:

1) reading copies from the library.
2) cast copies, unbound, at 40¢ ea.

Royalty should be paid to Samuel French. The rate is $25; in cases where this royalty would prohibit production, apply to French for special consideration.

VISITORS

Sister Mary Fabian had numerous examples of enthusiasm in her drama group at St. Mary's High School, Niagara Falls, to cite when she visited Conference Office d during Thanksgiving vacation. Meeting Monday evenings the boys and girls are currently at work on their own musical about Stephen Foster. Sister Mary Ricardo of Mercy School of Nursing, Buffalo (another new Conference member), who accompanied Sister Mary Fabian, is broadening the base of nursing school education with dramatics. Catholic Theatre interest in the Buffalo area is snowballing.

Also in New York for the College English sessions was Sister Mary Donatus, IHM, director of the Cue and Curtain Players whose 80 members have had a special role in the 25th Jubilee celebration of Immaculata College all year.

OPPORTUNITIES AT BLACKFRIARS'

As the number of young actors picked from the Blackfriars' casts for "down town" shows grows, the supply of new talent eager to play at 57th St. increases. Day after day we overhear from our corner of the office, "I am told this is the pl ce to come to be seen."

Blackfriars' Guild has become that- the showplace in New York for new acting talent. Assured of the attendance of first-string critics, talent scounts and producers, the actor who is attempting to force doors on Broadway finds this the magic key. Two "bit-players", for example, from "Seven Mirrors" were packed off on 24-hours notice for the Theatre Guilds' "Dunningan s Daughter." Two more have gone out on short engagements since Mirrors closed. BF' business manager Merritt Wyatt counted 24 the other day who won their chance on Broadway by their 57th St. Appearance.

For those would-be players who starve for acting opportunities while they address envelopes or "wait" at Schraffts, saving the middle of the day to trudge the rounds of casting offices, a part in a BF' cast fulfills their highest hopes. The three weeks' run with it s nightly opportunity to grow in the part is a rare blessing to summer stock-ers and drama school graduates. The three dsys following the nuns' performances provide an intensive rehearsal period based on udience reaction before facing the critics at the public opening.

Because it represents an exception-al opportunity, a part in a show is highly competitive. Approximately 3000 applic-tions have accumulated, most of them from ingenues. To win a part you must be good, and almost never is an actor given a second part.

Casting is managed in this way. From applications on file postal request s are sent to a number of those who might qualify from point of experience, age, and appearance. These come to read from the actual script. Over three evenings, for example, about 35 girls read for one part in the coming show: the best four were asked to return for a final reading and from these one was chosen. Incidentally, in this play there is no straight ingenue. Pity the waiting line. There is a real opportunity for talent at Blackfriars' Guild New York theatre, but the supply far outdistances the demand. Sometime perhaps technicians, too, will grasp the opportunity offered.

PUBLICITY

Publicity Chairman requests that you send to the Service Bureau any Conference publicity appearing in your Local press. Only in this way can Miss Heslin be sure that items submitted by her are released. Your assistance as a local clipping bureau for the Conference will be appreciated.

OVER THE SHOULDER

"arymount Players presented "The Rivals" at the College Auditorium, Saline, Kansas, Nov. 7 nd 8, and on Nov. 16, by request, traveled to Smoky Hill Army Air Field for a GI audience.

Father Hartke, O.P., reports ecstatic critical acclaim for Catholic University's recent production of "The Liar". Watch for its arrival on Broadway.

On Nov. 10, St. "ary Academy of Monroe, Michigan, told in pageant form the story of "100 Years of Prayer and Service."

Sacred Heart Academy of Springfield produced the all-girl "Career Angel" on November 12.

Another production of the feminine "Career Angel" was staged by Marquette Dramatic Club of Alton, Ill., November 20.

Springfield Little Theatre Players, Inc., inaugurated a custom of preceding the major production (in November "Night Must Fall") by a curtain-raiser. For the latter "Don't Feed the Animals," a one-act play by Bob Wellington, served.

Cameo Players' Secretary, Pat Crowley reports the First Installation Ceremony of Cameo Players as members of National Thespian Dramatic Society at Davenport in November.

Monte Cassino Masquers outdid themselves in three performances November 18 through 20 of "Murder in a Nunnery," and Sister ary Immaculata, O.S.B, offers pictures for the Conference files. This is only the first of s series of items from our new Tulsa group, we are sure, for their enthusiastic director is mapping a broad program to integrate music and drama in Monte Cassino's program.

Correction: Anthony Juliano played Cromwell in Loras' "Traitor's Ga te." (Nov. Calendar) More was played by Chester Gallagher, one of Father Schroeder's chief assistants on the Bulletin. Our thanks to Mr. Gallagher and apologies.

ROYALTY REDUCTION LIST

Please add to the Reduced Royalty List appearing on p. 4 of the October Calendar, under the heading Samuel French, "The First egion." The catalogue rate is $25; Conference Group Members are entitled to a reduced rate of $20. for the 1st performance; $15 for each succeeding performance.

For the benefit of new members who may not understand the special Conference reduction, the following information is appended.

1) Each year the Conference arranges with play publishers for special reductions to Conference Group Members on a limited list of plays which the Conference believes worthwhile.

2) It is understood by the publishers that the Conference will not request reductions on other titles during this period.

3)If on other plays your expenses are out of proportion to your income - because yours is a performance without admission charge or for other reasons - you are at liberty to request special consideration from the publishers. Write to them asking for the proper application form. Publishers prefer to make such individual arrangements direct with the group concerned, and they require data on last produ c-tion as well as the anticipated budget for the coming play on which you are seeking a reduction.

RED LETTER DAYS

November brought Paul Lilly back to Detroit and Catholic Theatre.

Theatre Arts Guild, Grand Rapids, sends advance notice of its 10th anniversary celebration - two performances of "The First egion" on Jan. 26 and 27. The Guild first produced "Legion" in 1940, and several members of the original cast, now returned from Armed Forces Service, will be welcomed home in their old part s.

Father Klein came to Loras College Players' aid by constructing an excellent bagpipe for their "Hasty Heart". It ha s been offered to Conference members for use in future productions.

Advertising in the El Paso Time s brought in the Decca Album of "Bernadette" music to Loretto Players. From guess whom - a former pupil at Loretto Academy.

CROSS-COUNTRY CIRCUIT - DECEMBER

Beaver Dam, Wisc.: Dec. 2, St. Peter's Dramatic Club presents "Brother Goose" in afternoon and evening performances.
Chicago: Academy of Our Lady offers "Why the Chimes Rang", Dec. 21.
Convent, N. J.: In its annual post-banquet entertainment Dramatic Association, College of St. Elizabeth, tells the ever new Christmas story in a sequence of scenses with narrator and choir.
Davenport: Junior Cameo Players, Immaculate Conception Academy produce 3 1-act plays Dec. 16: "A Lesson in Charm," comedy; "Sanctuary," drama: "For the Prince" Christmas play.
El Paso: Dec. 19, "The Christmas Jest" at Loretto Academy with 7th and 8th grades carrying the lines and all grades collaborating on dancing.
Grand Rapids: Mercian Dramatic Club, Mt. Mercy Academy, for its pre-Christmas program offers "Birds' Christmas Carol" and choral verse readings.
Immaculata, Pa.: Dec. 12, "The King's Jongleur," Cue and Curtain's fourth time presentation with 1945 experiments.
Mt. St. Joseph, O.: Freshmen of the College present "A Pageant of Our Lady", Dec. 6, for the Mothers' Club Christmas Party. Eve of Christmas vacation, Senior Mount Players entertain students and faculty with "Little Town of Bethlehem."
New Rochelle, N.Y.: Junior Class, College of New Rochelle for Mission Day, Dec. 1, presents "Seven Mirrors." Senior members of Props and Paint follow with "Harriet" Dec. 7 for Peter's Peace. "Christmas on the Village Square" will entertain faculty and students at the Christmas Party. The Radio Group's weekly seiies with "The Hollands", a model family, continues on WFAS, White Plains. And at its December meeting Props and paint plays host to Mr. Theophilus Lewis, drama critic of America.
River Forest, Ill.: Dec. 19, "Cause of Our Joy" an original by Jeanne Considine, member of Grex Guild, at Rosary College.
Tulsa: At Monte Cassino the Masquers, Dec. 14, offer The Magnificant and other Christmas chants in a choral program. And prior to vacation their adaption of the "York Nativity Play" which in its second presentation is establishing a tradition.
West Hartford, Ct.: Dec. 13 Queene's Company will present its traditional "Saint Joseph College Play for the Season of Christ's Nativity."

BROADWAY COMMENTS
By Mrs. Christopher Wyatt

A Sound of Hunting - Eight GI's in the front lines at Monte Cassino. The scene is of their fellowship with unusually amusing and characteristic dialogue unfortunately marred with unnecessary bad language. Good for little theatres if cleaned up. No girls.
Are You With It - Very gay showmanship. Amusing plat, but unfortunately the clean fun is interspersed with copious vulgarity.
State of the Union - Comedy hit of the season. Brilliant political satire flavored with idealism. The cast, including Ruth Hussey, Ralph Bellamy and Minor Watson, does it ample justice.
The Day Before Spring - Musical play centering around a college reunion, amusing lines, good moral, and unusually good sets. Ballet designed by Anthony Tudor featuring Hugh Lang, our greatest dancer.
The Rugged Path - Fine job by Spencer Tracy in the new Sherwood play which has received inadequate reviews. I recommend it highly.

COMING SOON

"The Magnificant Yankee" by Emmet Lavery - recently reelected President of Screen Writers' Guild - goes into rehearsal this month with Louis Calhern and Dorothy Gish in the leads. ut of town opening scheduled Ja. 7. The play has no relation to Elizabeth Bowen's biography but is based, in part, upon a study of Justice Holmes by Former Attorney - General Biddle.

THE READER'S THEATRE

A repertory theatre in which actors will read their parts will be launched in N. Y. on Dec. 14 with "Oedipus Rex." Cavada Humphrey organized for the past two years a similar group of equity players who read out versions of Shakespeare for Public High School classes in N. Y. When not participating in the scene, actors sat upstage. Miss Humphrey's company playing without props or costumes (or pay) never failed to arouse the enthusiasm of its young audience for Shakespeare. Whether the Broadway company under the direction of ames Light, can do as well with the classics at a $2.40 top remains to be seen.